

ANGIOPLASTY STENTS

This application is a continuation of Application No. 10/002,783,
filed October 30, 2001, ^{Now PAT No. 6,616,690} which is a continuation of Application No. 08/964,158,
5 filed November 4, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 6,309,414, the contents of which
are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates in general to so-called stents for
10 angioplasty.

Background of the Invention

The term "stent" is intended to indicate in general a device to be fitted in
a lumen (for example, inside a blood vessel), usually by catheterization, and
15 subsequently spread out in situ in order to support the lumen locally. This has
the main purpose of preventing the re-establishment of a stenotic site in the
location treated. It should, however, be pointed out that it has already been
proposed in the art to use substantially similar structures for spreading-out and
anchoring vascular grafts in situ; naturally this possible extension of the field of
20 application is also intended to be included in the scope of the invention.

For a general teaching with regard to vascular stents, reference may
usefully be made to the work "Textbook of Interventional Cardiology" by Eric
J. Topol, W.B. Saunders Company, 1994 and, in particular, to Section IV of
Vol. II, entitled "Coronary stenting".

25 A large number of patent documents are also dedicated to the subject as
is shown, for example, by US-A-4 776 337, US-A-4 800 882, US-A-4 907 336,
US-A-4 886 062, US-A-4 830 003, US-A-4 856 516, US-A-4 768 507, and US-
A-4 503 569.